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SOME DECIDUOUS WOODY PLANTS WHICH REMAIN PRESENTABLE FIFTY-TWO WEEKS OF THE YEAR

A landscape composition is only as good as the materials of which it is composed, therefore the importance of care in the selection and combination of plants should be quite obvious. Discriminate choice in the beginning will assure more effective ultimate results.

Attractiveness the year-round should be the number one aim of any planting scheme, and to strive toward achievement of such a goal it is imperative that one be thoroughly familiar with the varied seasonal aspects of the plants chosen. Such features as winter form and structural framework, summer contour, texture and color of bark, branch and twig, foliage characteristics from bud stage to autumn coloration and leaf drop, floral and fruit effects and numerous other less evident qualities must all be taken into consideration.

The smaller the property the more complicated the problem, space limitations imposing definite restrictions as regards suitability of material. Where every foot of space counts, each plant used should contribute something to the landscape whatever the season and whether planted singly for specimen effect or incorporated into a landscape grouping.

The dormant season is the ideal time to be on the lookout for picturesque trees and shrubs, those like the European alder, the hawthorns, the sour gum, sassafras, pagoda dogwood, cutleaf staghorn sumac and others whose distinctive beauty of line sets them apart. Prominent bark is also a feature then, especially among the birches, the beeches, the persimmon, the hop hornbeam and the winged euonymus variations. Winter buds have noteworthy style points too, the flowering dogwood, beech, magnolia, bitternut hickory and horsechestnut being good examples. Fruit, whether fleshy or dry, fleeting or long persistent, is another desirable feature and one in the same interest category as persistent foliage, prominent thorns etc. Certain of the crabapples and hawthorns represent these interests here, as do the magnolias, cotoneasters, privets and viburnums.

Spring awakens a new awareness of the plants about us, precipitated not only by swelling and unfolding buds, but in the subtle coloration

of expanding leaves as well. Spring is, of course, flowering time for a majority of woody plants, bringing into prominence blossoms of every size, shape and color from the precocious, small yellow blooms of the Japanese corneliancherry dogwood to the brightly colored Japanese quinces and the bolder textured magnolias.

Summer offers even greater possibilities, the continuing blossom displays being supplemented by the differences in texture and color of mature foliage and the appearance of some fruits. It is in summer, too, that a plant's mass effect is most easily discernible and its contour most clearly defined. The blossoming of such plants as the Sweet bay magnolia, bottlebrush buckeye and the Japanese tree lilac is an outstanding feature of the summer landscape, as is the early ripening fruit of the Juneberries, the winter honeysuckle, certain viburnums and a host of other ornamentals.

It is in autumn, however, that the real bounty of the landscape is revealed, in a lavish combination of colored foliage and fruit. Hues of every color are represented in the foliage change, which includes cream, yellow, orange, russet, scarlet, crimson and purple. The plants with showy fruits practically duplicate the range in addition to adding blue, blue-black, black, turquoise and white to the color repertoire. As companion, background or facer subjects for combining with autumnal color and fruit, the materials with persistent and semi-persistent green foliage come into use. It is the contrast they provide to which the autumnal scene owes much of its sparkle and brilliance.

Fortunately the number of woody plants of all-season interest is not limited, there being a more than adequate assortment of both trees and shrubs. Among the following are included some of the most desirable ones together with a brief resume of their special qualifications.

TREES

European Alder, *Alnus glutinosa*: picturesque pyramidal or irregular habit of growth; decorative pendent catkins in spring; good dark green summer foliage which retains its color until late in the fall.

Snowy Shadblow, *Amelanchier grandiflora*: graceful horizontal branch structure; grayish bark; pendent white flower clusters (May); edible blue-black fruit in June; terra cotta or orange fall color.

River Birch, *Betula nigra*: irregular or oval outline, often multiple-trunked; very shaggy orange-tan bark; decorative catkins in spring; good summer foliage turning yellow in autumn.

Paper Birch, *Betula papyrifera*: picturesque, generally pyramidal outline; bark snowy white; decorative catkins in spring; rich green summer color; clear yellow autumnal color.

Gray Birch, *Betula populifolia*: lower growing species, often multiple-trunked; bark white, marked with black triangular patches at junctions of branches and main trunk; decorative catkins in spring; summer foliage glossy green; fall color golden yellow.

European Hornbeam, *Carpinus betulus*: dense pyramidal and eventually rounded outline; bark smooth, gray; foliage light green in early spring, medium green in summer and dull gold in fall, persisting through the winter.

American Hornbeam or Blue Beech, *Carpinus caroliniana*: understory tree of irregular growth, often multi-stemmed; bark smooth, gray, muscular; decorative catkins in spring; good summer foliage turning burnt orange in autumn; decorative, persistent fruit clusters.

Flowering Dogwood, *Cornus florida*: picturesque horizontally branched small tree; very conspicuous white flowers (May); bright red fruit and crimson to purplish fall foliage color; round flower buds prominent in winter.

Cockspur Hawthorn, *Crataegus crus-galli*: umbrella shaped or flat-headed tree with wide spreading horizontal branches; abundant white flowers (late May); glossy green foliage; wine red fruits in autumn, often persisting late; long slender spines.

Washington Hawthorn, *Crataegus phaenopyrum* (syn. *cordata*): of columnar habit when young, round-headed later; abundant small white flowers (late May); lustrous summer foliage; spectacular scarlet-orange fall color; persistent small Chinese red fruit.

Dotted Hawthorn, *Crataegus punctata*: picturesque flat-topped tree with wide-spreading horizontal branches; white flowers (late May); deeply veined foliage; dotted red or yellow fruit.

Persimmon, *Diospyros virginiana*: irregular tree with wide-angled, contorted branches; rich green foliage with an inclination to droop; yellow fall color suffused with orange and purple; edible, globular, orange fruit; prominently checkered bark.

European Beech, *Fagus sylvatica*: stately rounded form; smooth gray bark; lustrous deep green summer foliage turning gold and russet in autumn and often persisting well into the winter; long pointed brown buds.

Sweet Bay Magnolia, *Magnolia virginiana* (syn. *glauca*): irregularly branched shrubby tree; very handsome bold, glossy-green foliage with lighter under-surfaces; extremely fragrant cup-shaped white flowers in early summer; red-coated seeds in cucumber-like pods (fall); persistent foliage.

Red Jade Crabapple, *Malus* 'Red Jade': picturesque pendulous habit of growth; small flowers in May, pinkish outside, white within; small, bright red, cherry-like fruit in the fall.

Japanese Zumi Crabapple, *Malus zumi calocarpa*: attractive widespreading habit of growth; pink buds opening into white flowers (early May); dense summer foliage; abundant pea-sized red or yellow fruit ripening in the fall and clinging well into the winter.

Sour Gum, *Nyssa sylvatica*: habit of growth extremely picturesque, the irregular branches horizontal or often drooping at the tips; lustrous green summer foliage; dark blue fruit (late summer); spectacular scarlet to orange-red and purplish fall foliage color.

Quaking Aspen, *Populus tremuloides*: graceful, open habit of growth; interesting grayish catkins in spring; summer foliage of lively movement; clear gold fall color; gray or olive-green bark.

Pin Oak, *Quercus palustris*: of shapely pyramidal outline with deflected lower branches; fine-textured summer foliage of glossy green; scarlet or deep red fall color, the leaves often clinging late.

Golden Weeping Willow, *Salix alba tristis*: round-headed tree with graceful pendulous branches; attractive catkins in early spring; good summer foliage clinging late in the fall; golden twigs conspicuous in winter.

Sassafras, *Sassafras albidum*: picturesque both in branch structure and contour; chartreuse flowers in spring; interesting summer foliage of three shapes; blue fruit on red pedicels in fall; autumnal foliage change showy, varying from yellow-orange to scarlet; twigs green in winter; aromatic.

SHRUBS

Bottlebrush Buckeye, *Aesculus parviflora*: symmetrically rounded contour, branches mostly erect; bold-textured summer foliage interestingly poised on the branches; handsome erect spikes of white flowers (July); clear yellow fall color.

Stanford Red Japanese Quince, *Chaenomeles lagenaria* 'Stanford Red': of pleasing irregular shape with widespreading horizontal branches; large bright red flowers (May); glossy green summer foliage; aromatic yellow fruit; yellow fall color.

Pagoda Dogwood, *Cornus alternifolia*: attractive in habit with the horizontal branches arranged in tiers; creamy flowers (May); rich green summer foliage; bright blue fruit on red pedicels (August); purplish fall foliage color.

Japanese Corneliancherry Dogwood, *Cornus officinalis*: pleasing structural framework; precocious yellow flowers (April); glossy summer foliage; abundant oblong red fruit in late fall; exfoliating bark; rounded flower buds prominent in winter.

Gray Dogwood, *Cornus racemosa*: stoloniferous shrub forming pleasing undulating masses; clusters of small, creamy-white flowers (June); abundant white fruit on bright red pedicels (Sept.); purplish fall color; reddish twigs with a pleasing frosty lavender winter color.

Cranberry Cotoneaster, *Cotoneaster apiculata*: interesting mounded habit of growth; small pinkish-white flowers (June); round, dark green, glossy leaves; cranberry sized fruit in the fall.

Manyflower Cotoneaster, *Cotoneaster multiflora calocarpa*: gracefully arching branches, symmetrically rounded outline; clustered white flowers (May); round, blue-green summer foliage; abundant bright red fruit (Sept.); purplish-brown winter twig color.

Leatherwood, *Dirca palustris*: pleasing rounded outline; early tiny yellow flowers (April); oval leaves of bright green; flexible olive-brown branches.

Winged Euonymus, *Euonymus alata*: picturesque horizontal habit of growth; tender green new leaves; bright green summer foliage; distinctive rose-pink fall color; prominent, corky-winged twigs of pleasing texture.

Large Fothergilla, *Fothergilla major*: erect branching habit; fragrant white bottle-brush-like flowers (mid-May); medium green summer foliage; outstanding fall color ranging from clear gold to scarlet and purplish.

Vernal Witchhazel, *Hamamelis vernalis*: of compact or irregular habit; very early old gold or reddish flowers (Jan.-Mar.); bold, medium green summer foliage; clear yellow autumn color.

Common Witchhazel, *Hamamelis virginiana*: pleasing compact or irregular habit of branching; bold, medium green summer foliage; clear yellow autumn color; very late yellow flowers (Oct.-Nov.); persistent seed capsules.

Japanese Kerria, *Kerria japonica*: slender branched shrub of twiggy habit; golden-yellow flowers (late May); light green summer foliage; late yellow fall color; bright green winter twigs.

Regels Border Privet, *Ligustrum obtusifolium regelianum*: picturesque horizontal branch structure; small white flowers (June); fine textured foliage; old gold to purple fall color; small, persistent, powder-blue fruit.

Winter Honeysuckle, *Lonicera fragrantissima*: graceful arching habit; very fragrant, early appearing flowers (Apr.); red fruit (June); excellent leathery, dark green summer foliage persisting well into the winter.

Star Magnolia, *Magnolia stellata*: densely branched round-headed shrub or small tree; narrow-petalled, fragrant white flowers (late Apr.); narrow, dark green summer foliage; bright red seeds in green pods; yellow to bronze fall color.

Mountain Ninebark, *Physocarpus monogynus*: dense twiggy growth, rounded outline; clusters of small white flowers (May); fine-textured summer foliage; late, burnt-orange fall foliage color.

Fragrant Sumac, *Rhus aromatica*: semi-procumbent branches; early yellow flowers; three-parted, fine-textured aromatic foliage; small, red, berry-like fruit; brilliant scarlet, yellow and purplish fall color.

Cutleaf Staghorn Sumac, *Rhus typhina laciniata*: delightfully picturesque habit of growth; luxuriant summer foliage; decorative pyramidal fruit clusters; brilliant orange-scarlet fall color.

Alpine Currant, *Ribes alpinum*: evenly mounded contour; early appearing bright green foliage; fine-textured summer foliage holding its color until late in the fall; brownish branches with prominent buds.

Primrose Rose, *Rosa primula*: erect branching habit; primrose-yellow flowers (May); fine-textured aromatic foliage; small reddish fruit; brown canes.

Japanese Tree Lilac, *Syringa amurensis japonica*: interesting upright shrub usually multiple-stemmed; bold summer foliage; spectacular, large pyramidal spikes of creamy flowers (late June); shiny, cherry-like bark.

Siebold Viburnum, *Viburnum sieboldi*: irregularly rounded habit of growth; bold, medium green summer foliage; flat clusters of creamy flowers (May); showy pink to red to black fruit on red pedicels (late summer); foliage remains green in autumn.

Doublefile Viburnum, *Viburnum tomentosum*: distinctive horizontal habit of growth; flat clusters of white flowers borne along the upper sides of the branches; dark green summer foliage; small, red to black fruit in autumn; reddish-purple fall foliage color.

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Note: Additional information pertaining to height, exposure, soil, moisture conditions and other cultural requirements may be found in the following bulletins: Vol. 35 Nos. 2-3, Feb.-March, 1960; Vol. 35 Nos. 7-8, July-August, 1960.

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Cockspur Hawthorn, *Crataegus crus galli*, as effective snow covered as it is during blossom time, in summer or in autumn.